



POLICY

Resident Engagement

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out The Royal Borough of Kingston (RBK) Council's approach to involving and engaging with Council housing tenants and leaseholders

Scope

1.1 This policy applies to all Kingston Council's residents living in General Needs rented properties, Housing for Older People, Leasehold, Shared Owners and to advocates acting on behalf of our residents.

1.2 In implementing this policy RBK will:

- Comply with relevant legislation, and meet its responsibilities and duties as a landlord by complying with the Regulator for Social Housing's Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England;
- Ensure that residents have access to a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved in decision-making, policies and strategic priorities, service development and improvement;
- Work with residents to support effective scrutiny of our performance;
- Provide support to enable residents to build their capacity and be more effectively involved.

2 Definitions

2.1 Resident Engagement as defined by TPAS (Tenant participation Advisory Service) – Tenant Engagement Experts is: "working with residents/tenants to co-produce effective services that meet a variety of needs; for example, building in accountability through communication, monitoring and scrutiny".

2.2 It is about empowering tenants, residents and communities to work with organisations to achieve shared aims.

2.3. It is about providing opportunities for residents and communities to have a say in the monitoring, reviewing, designing, approving, influencing or commenting on the decisions, activities and services that take place within organisations.

3 Policy Statement

3.1 Kingston Council is committed to involving and empowering our residents in how we run housing services.

3.2 Kingston Council understands the need to get more residents involved in designing,

3.3 influencing and improving landlord services. To do this we will promote ways to get involved, keep things simple and ensure performance information is accessible.

- 3.4 We will be open and transparent in the provision of performance about our services, including how we compare to others, and we will actively empower and enable residents to scrutinise our work and recommend improvements.

4 Policy Aims (Principles)

- 4.1 We want to ensure that resident engagement at Kingston Council is as meaningful as possible. We will therefore work to the following principles:

Placing residents at the heart of everything we do:

- Working in partnership with residents to develop and deliver better services
- Making it easy for customers to work with us, make their views known and seek redress when services fail;
- Providing different opportunities for engagement that are easy to access and meet the circumstances and preferences of residents;
- Treating all residents with fairness and respect, and tailor services to meet individual requirements;
- Involving residents in the development of policies that affect their home and involve them in ideas about service changes so that they influence, improve and co-design services with us;
- Letting participants know the results of any consultations, feedback, views and suggestions made

5. Roles & Responsibilities

5.1 Kingston Council's Housing Portfolio Holder & Executive Management Team

Are responsible for setting and supporting a culture of resident involvement and engagement, and for monitoring outcomes related to involvement and engagement.

5.2 All Service Leads and Managers

Are responsible for ensuring that involving and engaging residents is a core value of Kingston Council's services, for identifying opportunities to engage and involve customers, and for ensuring their services work in partnership with residents to develop and improve services.

5.3 All RBK Housing Employees, Suppliers and Contractors

Have a responsibility to comply with this policy and to ensure that residents are engaged and consulted in the delivery, development, and improvement of services.

5.4 The Resident Engagement Specialist

Accountable for working with Service Leads to ensure effective and inclusive measures of engaging and involving our residents in all aspects in the business, and for providing support and good practice advice on resident involvement and engagement to our operational services.

6. Our Resident Engagement Service

- Resident involvement and engagement is integral to the work of Kingston Council.
- We aim to ensure that residents and stakeholders across the borough have a voice to influence the development of policies and strategies that will affect their lives.
- We intend to make it easy for residents to participate in service improvement activities to ensure that residents' voices are heard.
- We will reach out to participating residents with a variety of techniques to gain people's views and feedback.
- We will provide a range of opportunities for residents to engage with our business, either on a regular or ad hoc basis, including involvement in (but not limited to): scrutiny functions, service and performance monitoring and review; focus groups and discussions; surveys and digital (online) engagement; and contractor selection.
- We will provide support and offer residents the opportunity to participate at a level of their choice
- We will provide formal representation opportunities for residents at housing related forums such as scrutiny groups and focus groups.
- We will ensure that recognised resident groups governance structures are accountable and are run through a democratic process
- Develop and work closely with a diverse range of community groups who will be alert to local issues
- We will aim to involve residents in the procurement of new contractual services that have a direct impact on the management of their homes and services they receive

We offer a wide range of opportunities for influence and involvement in decisions about Housing and Landlord Services, including:

- Designing and delivering housing-related policies and strategic priorities;
- Making decisions about how housing is delivered and the setting of service standards;
- Consulting on key performance indicators and targets;

We will involve and consult with residents on issues including:

- Local service delivery, performance monitoring, and regular reviews of our service standards;
- We will work alongside and support residents by: developing and implementing a range of opportunities for involvement in the delivery of our housing services and community engagement activities; setting up service improvement panels, including client-specific and thematic groups that will contribute to improved or new innovative services and provide increased value for money and satisfaction;
- Reviewing our customers' needs and supporting their requirements and expectations;

- Building residents' capacity to be effectively involved, and ensuring residents and involved groups are able to have the greatest influence over services through the provision of appropriate support and training.
- We will provide feedback and communicate outcomes to residents who are involved and/or engage with us, and more widely to ensure accountability to all residents.
- We will publicise where resident influence has added value by helping us achieve greater efficiency and value for money for residents.
- We will consider vulnerability and customer needs throughout our involvement and engagement activities, and will tailor our approach and communications to meet different types of support needs wherever practicable. This includes making reasonable adjustments to remove or reduce the effect of an individual's disability.

7. Legal Framework

This policy underpins the Legal framework:

- Housing White Paper – 2020
- Regulator for Social Housing – Consumer Standards 2020
- Building Safety Bill 2020
- Equality Act 2010

8. Equality and Diversity

- 8.1 The council is committed to working with and involving all sections of our diverse communities, particularly those at risk of exclusion, vulnerable or elderly
- 8.2 We will develop proactive methods to engage with hard to reach and diverse communities
- 8.3 We recognise and will take into account the diverse and changing nature of our communities when developing consultation and involvement programmes

9 Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the Head of Landlord Services that this policy is implemented

10 Monitoring and Reviewing

- 10.1 Monitoring of this policy, its implementation and effectiveness will be achieved through the production of the annual housing report
- 10.2 The formal engagement platforms will demonstrate the council accountability on how well the council is delivering engagement

11 Appendix

- 11.1 The Resident Engagement Strategy

11.2 The Resident Engagement Structure

12. Review

This policy will be reviewed and take account of any changes to legislation that may occur

Revision History

| Version | Date | Revision Author | Summary of Changes |
|---------|------------|-----------------|--|
| 1.0 | 11/02/2022 | Samantha Lewis | First version published as part of the Engagement Strategy and Process |
| 2.0 | 04/03/2022 | Samantha Lewis | Further edits as part of the Engagement Strategy and Process |

Distribution

| Name | Position | Date circulated |
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Approval

| Name | Position | Date of approval |
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| Jane Ball | Head of Landlord Services | 29 Jul 2022 |